

# Canadian Planning Issues

By Hans Blumenfeld

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## **CANADIAN PLANNING ISSUES**

This report was prepared by  
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## INTRODUCTION

This paper deals with many issues currently faced by Canadian planners. It is knowledgeable and thought-provoking, and does not subscribe to "conventional wisdom" on several topics. By its very nature it cannot reflect the view of every member of the Institute — even if such an objective were possible. For example, some planners may feel that urban questions here take precedence over broader regional or resource issues; there may be other views on projected population growth and distribution, or on the best use of prime agricultural land, or on the role of citizen participation. And naturally in a paper this size there have to remain excluded many other questions such as the relation between planning and the quality of life, or the degree to which new technology and the scarcity of some forms of energy may affect population distribution and the shape of settlements.

The Canadian Institute of Planners, however, remains firm in its belief that any individual opinion on particular issues must remain of less significance than the prime objective of publishing a document that expresses a viewpoint on most of the major planning issues currently facing Canada. Indeed, many would welcome further expansion of several issues covered in the paper, and insofar as he has caused many planners to reappraise some of their previously unquestioned assumptions, Dr. Blumenfeld has succeeded to a remarkable degree!

## FOREWORD

The Canadian Institute of Planners has been involved in the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements both as an observer to the main event and as a participant to the parallel Habitat Forum organized for non-governmental organizations. In addition, the 1976 C.I.P. Conference, held in Winnipeg, stresses this theme.

Reflecting this, the Institute placed considerable importance priority on the preparation of a paper dealing with the issues discussed at the U.N. Conference. Accordingly, an eminent Canadian planner, Dr. Hans Blumenfeld, was requested to prepare a position paper on behalf of the Institute for consideration by the membership and ultimately for transmittal to the Federal Government and the Conference.

While it is recognized that no one paper could accurately reflect the views of the Institute, it would be appropriate to describe the process through which Dr. Blumenfeld's paper passed. A draft was prepared in the Fall of 1975, and was then discussed at seminars across the country. The resulting viewpoints were co-ordinated and presented to the National Council for discussion at its November meeting. These viewpoints and this paper have been submitted to the Canadian Government to assist in preparing for Habitat.

There is no attempt to present a consensus of opinion on these topics. The Institute is cognizant of regional differences in Canada. It is these differences in culture, history, lifestyle and perceptions which make each region unique. This uniqueness results in the need for Canadians to communicate and to discuss their ideas and experiences.

Dr. Blumenfeld's paper is singularly inspiring and stands on its own. We offer his thoughts to stimulate Canadian thinking and we invite Canadians individually and as non-government organizations to submit their reactions to the Institute.

It gives me great pleasure to recognize Dr. Blumenfeld's abilities in presenting a complex subject comprehensively and clearly. I also acknowledge with gratitude the contribution to this programme from the Canadian Habitat Secretariat. I thank Jonas Lehrman the Manitoba representative on the National Council, for his guidance and wisdom in preparing this publication.

Mark L. Dorfman, M.Sc.(Pl.), M.C.I.P.  
President.

## Distribution of People



## **Population Total**

Any discussion of population distribution must start from the present and anticipated total to be distributed. At present, Canada is the world's most underpopulated country. This applies not only to the not too meaningful average population density, but to the amount per head of natural resources, renewable as well as non-renewable. There are about 10 acres of agricultural land suitable for growing crops for every Canadian, compared to a global average of one acre per head.

This disproportion is not likely to be changed by natural increase. The Canadian fertility rate is now well below parity. Under the assumption of continuation of present fertility rate and life expectancy and of zero net immigration, the Canadian population would reach a peak of less than 30 million around the turn of the century and thereafter decrease at an increasing rate. The fertility rate is, of course, notoriously erratic; however, a further decline is more probable than a rise.

If the disproportion is not to increase even further, Canada needs a substantial net immigration averaging not less than 1% annually. This is not entirely a question of planning. There seems to be a widespread illusion that planners — and/or governments — are God. In fact, while government can exercise a strong influence, it cannot exactly determine net immigration by fiat. Net immigration is the difference between gross immigration and emigration. Both our concepts of personal liberty and the extreme length of our land and sea borders preclude any control of emigration. Both factors also may limit the ability of government to enforce a ceiling on immigration. Even more limited is government's capacity to establish a floor for immigration. In Western Europe, the traditional source of our immigrants, there is no longer a strong motivation to go to Canada. Communist governments, controlling one-third of the world's population, effectively restrict emigration, and the "third world" countries, increasingly aware of their losses by the "brain drain", may adopt similar, if less stringent, restrictions.

Tentatively, it is assumed that net immigration will average 1% annually. The resulting population growth rate will still be below world average. For the foreseeable future, Canada will remain the world's most underpopulated country.

## **Regional Distribution**

Our small population is very unevenly distributed. Nine-tenths of our country is practically empty; nine-

tenths of all Canadians are concentrated on 7% of the land. However, this 7% equals 700,000 Km<sup>2</sup>, 100,000 Km<sup>2</sup> more than the combined area of West Germany, the U.K., the Benelux countries, and Switzerland, which supports a population of about 150 million, under roughly comparable soil and climatic conditions. Evidently, even this 7% of our territory is underpopulated and underdeveloped, and there is no reason to shift population out of it. It may, however, be considered desirable to shift people into the vast empty areas of the North in order to develop their natural resources. The question is moot. As far as agricultural and forestry products are concerned, it may be that increases can be obtained with smaller inputs in the South than in the North. As for the exploitation of mineral resources and of water power, capital rather than labour appears to be the limiting factor.

In addition to the general South-North difference, population is also, and increasingly, unevenly distributed East to West, giving rise to demands of some provinces that the Federal Government should counteract this trend. There are good reasons for equity to work toward an equalization of real - including non-monetary - income, and also to stem the selective migration loss of the most productive members of the community which threatens some localities and regions. However, the often voiced demand for equalization of growth rates amounts to a demand that the distribution of population, which has always changed throughout human history, should be frozen forever at the pattern obtaining in 1975 A.D.

### **Distribution by Size of Settlement**

Interwoven but with different regional distribution is distribution by size of the unit of human settlement.

For well-known reasons, urbanization is progressing rapidly all over the world. Canada has reached the point where this process has almost run its course and is slowing down. While, both in the 1901-1921 and in the 1941-61 periods, our urban population grew by more than 100 %, in the twenty years from 1975 to 1995 it is not likely to grow by more than 55%. Certainly we have the ability to cope with this rate of growth; maybe we are lacking the will to do so.

The relevant unit of urbanization is no longer the town or city, but the metropolitan or urban area. While in the socialist countries small and medium sized urban areas have been growing faster than the largest ones, in market-economy countries there has been an increasing concen-



tration, in particular in the primate cities. However, the latest census reports seem to indicate that in the most advanced countries this trend has stopped or even reversed. As yet it is not clear to what extent this is a statistical illusion, due to a failure to adjust the boundaries of the metropolitan area to its factual extension; but certainly in Canada, as elsewhere in the "West", the time of the "metropolitan explosion" is over.

To the extent that public opinion and governments still consider the growth of the three Canadian metropolitan areas with populations over one million — Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver — to be excessive, the most promising approach (apart from redistribution within metropolitan regions, which will be discussed later), appears to be the French strategy of creating "counter-magnets" with populations averaging one-half to one million.

Two options present themselves for this strategy: foundation of new cities or enlargement of existing ones. New cities are attractive to administrators because of ease and low cost of land acquisition and to designers because they provide a tabula rasa for the exercise of their imagination. But they have two drawbacks. For a long time the age composition of their population is abnormal, with an excess of young parents and small children, few adolescents, and practically no one over 50. For an even longer period there is an unbalance between demand and supply of services, many of which are "lumpy". Either supply lags; or it is provided ahead of time, at considerable cost. Both drawbacks can be avoided by promoting incremental growth of existing metropolitan areas of a size between about a quarter and a half million, of which there are quite a number in Canada. Smaller towns will, of course, also continue to exist, but it should be kept in mind that vulnerability increases with decreasing size; if one plant closes, there are few other opportunities for employment.

Governments can, of course, use a number of incentives and disincentives to influence population distribution. However, these will induce people to leave big cities, or to abstain from moving to them only if they succeed in making these cities unattractive, at least in relative terms. It is unlikely that governments will go very far in that direction. It is therefore assumed that larger metropolitan regions will continue to grow, with a moderate relative shift from the three largest ones to those of the following size group.

## Utilization of Land



### **Urban-Rural Competition for Land**

This paper will not deal with utilization of land for agriculture, forestry, large-scale conservation and recreation, except to note that these uses are not mutually exclusive. It will concentrate on questions related to urban development.

In recent years concern has been expressed that the absorption of agricultural land by the expansion of our large metropolitan areas may endanger our supply of food. This concern is misplaced for at least three reasons.

First, the order of magnitude is different. It has been predicted that the combined population of the metropolitan areas of Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver would be 15 million in the year 2000. Assuming that these 15 million occupy land at the low density of 10 per acre (the corresponding current figure in Metropolitan Toronto is 16), they would occupy a total of 1.5 million acres, less than 1% of all Canadian land suitable for agriculture. Second, it is not cities that absorb land, but people. The smaller the community, the greater the absorption of land per person. If the 15 million people would live not in three metropolitan communities, but in 300, averaging 50,000 population, they would cover much more land with buildings and pavements; and if they lived in 30,000 villages of 500 each, they would cover still more.

Third, the notion that "urban" land use is identical with a "concrete desert", is unfounded. At a density of 10 persons per acre, the greater part consists of public and private open space which can be used for food production whenever the need arises, as evidenced by the wartime experience of England and other countries. Indeed, even now it is advisable to provide land for allotment gardens in our cities.

The fact that the fear of urban expansion dangerously reducing food production is spurious is not an excuse for the waste of prime agricultural land by excessively low densities and by lack of attention to soil quality; but in metropolitan regions its preservation may have a lower priority than that of scenic-recreational, watershed, and water-recharge areas.

## The Urban Perimeter

While the amount of land actually occupied by urban uses is relatively minor, a much larger amount is taken out of agricultural use in metropolitan areas in Canada, in contrast to those in Europe. In part this is the result of institutional arrangements such as the tax system; but it is also due to the scatteration of urban uses. This considerably increases the cost and time required to serve the urban uses and it cuts up the "open" land into odd-shaped pieces, ill-suited for either agriculture or recreation. The first principle of urban-metropolitan land use planning is to clearly separate and hold together "developed" and "open" areas, respectively.

Carried to its ultimate conclusion, this principle would lead to a circular city — the form toward which cities have always tended "naturally" and which reduces the urban perimeter to a minimum. However, the urban perimeter is, by definition, the urban-rural interface. It is primarily in order to maximize this interface that reformers have proposed to replace the compact city by other forms. Basically, there are only three of these: the "ribbon", "constellation" or "satellite", and the "finger" or "radiating" plan. The ribbon makes sense only for small and medium sized cities, up to a population of 100,000 or 200,000. In larger agglomerations, ribbons may take the form of fingers extending from the more or less circular core. These fingers may consist of a string of "satellites", that is of relatively "self-contained" units, which may be defined as "new boroughs". In comparison with isolated "new towns" these have the advantages of incremental growth discussed earlier.

To some extent these same advantages are available to "satellite" towns if they are developed by planned extension of existing towns, situated outside the metropolitan area but within the metropolitan region. The metropolitan area is here defined as a common labour and housing market, or a commuter watershed. The commuting radius tends to extend about 45 minutes of door-to-door travel time, up to 25 miles from the centre. The metropolitan region includes a wide surrounding belt,

which relies on the central area for "higher order" business and consumer services, and on which the central area relies for outdoor recreation. Such a region tends to spread up to a travel time of 2 hours, or as far as 100 miles from the centre.

Small and medium-sized towns located within a metropolitan region have, in addition to the access to services, also the advantage of lesser vulnerability because their inhabitants have access to other employment opportunities within the metropolitan region. Their resulting greater growth potential is empirically confirmed by an analysis of the population growth 1941 to 1969 of the 17 cities in Ontario which, during this period, passed the 20,000 mark. While the 7 located outside metropolitan regions grew by 117%, the 10 inside such regions grew by 284%.

To sum up, urban growth should generally be confined within "fingers" radiating from metropolitan cities, and within extension areas of selected towns located within metropolitan regions.

### **Interaction of Land Use and Transportation**

One of the most disturbing phenomena of modern life is the proliferation of motor vehicle movement with its toll of accidents and air pollution. Two strategies are available for its reduction: first, replacement by less damaging means of transportation, and second, reducing the need for movement by locating potential origins and destinations closer together.

Replacement by public carriers is possible only when a sufficient volume of persons or goods can be assembled for movement over a given route at a given time. This requires concentration generally at both ends of a trip, but at the very least at one end. In small towns such concentrations can hardly be found. The larger the population of an urban area, the greater the percentage of person trips that can be made by public transit. Similarly, only between large urban concentrations can frequent and fast train, or even bus, services be operated; and, even more important, efficient means of goods transportation

such as unit trains, ships, and pipelines. While dispersal of people and activities over all parts of the country may have its attraction, it would imply almost exclusive reliance on the motor vehicle.

The second strategy, reduction of travel distances, may be even more important. Several measures are available. The most obvious one is an increase in densities. This is certainly worth pursuing, but it must be realized that it runs counter to a trend which has been consistent for over a century, before and independent of the motor vehicle. As wealth and leisure increase, more land per person is absorbed for *all* purposes; not only for residence, but also for work, recreation, etc.

Another possible measure, a compact form, has already been discussed, as well as the countervailing desire for an increased urban-rural interface.

More promising is the establishment within each section of an urban and metropolitan area of an approximate balance between resident labour force and places of employment, qualitatively as well as quantitatively; as well as between demand for and supply of services. It is important to concentrate all kinds of services, public, voluntary, and commercial, in one closely-knit centre for each section. This allows the customers to move between their residences and the centre by public transit, and between the various services within the centre on foot. Equally important, such subcentre help to create a sense of community. There is a widespread belief that such a community must be identified by a boundary in form of a "green-belt". However, there is strong evidence that identity is derived from a common centre, rather than from a common periphery. A convincing example is the extremely strong neighbourhoods (*harat*) of Islamic cities, which have no visible boundaries.

Organization of each section, whether contiguous or isolated, into a balanced community with a strong centre, may be formulated as a guiding principle for the spatial planning of a metropolitan region. No definite statement can be made about the optimum size of such subcentres; evidently a hierarchy is required. However, a subcentre of

the largest class should probably be designed to serve no less than one-twelfth of the total population of the metropolitan area.

## **Role of Government and other Units in Planning**





### **Who Plans?**

The foregoing discussion implies that some unspecified power, variously defined as “we”, or as “the planners”, or as “*the government*”, determines the distribution of people and activities at various scales, together with the corresponding utilization of land. This model does not reflect the real life situation.

In Canada, land is a commodity, which is bought and sold at prices determined by the market according to the relation between supply and demand. The owner determines its use. Various government bodies own various pieces of land, primarily those required for services which these bodies supply, such as streets, parks, or schools. However, the bulk of land in populated areas is privately owned.

The Provinces have jurisdiction over all lands (except those owned by the Federal Government) within their boundaries. The power derived from this legislation is purely negative: it can tell the property owner what he shall *not* do, but not what he shall do. The power is exercised primarily by subdivision control and by restricted area (“zoning”) by-laws. The primary function of restricted area (“zoning”) by-laws. The primary function of zoning is the protection of property values, a purpose which requires both equality for all properties within a given zone and predictability, hence uniformity and rigidity.

In addition to these means of direct control, governments can and do strongly influence the use to which owners put their land by the supply or withholding of services such as roads, water, sewage, transit, parks, schools, etc., which make the lands so served more or less attractive for certain users.

The actual development of urban areas is therefore, as it has always been, not the result of “a plan”, but of the interaction of the plans of governments with the plans of many private — physical or corporate — persons, in their role as users representing the demand and/or as land owners “developing” the supply.

### **The Role of Various Government Bodies**

For a sovereign city-state, such as Singapore, there is one government level. In Canada, in addition to the federal and provincial, there is at least one municipal level with delegated powers, and in the largest metropolitan areas there are two. Moreover, there is an insistent demand for further delegation to units of

“neighbourhood” size. Each of these three, four, or five levels plans. By what criteria can decision-making power be assigned to one or the other?

There can be no quarrel with the basic principle that “people have the right to control their own environment”, but this does not justify a claim to neighbourhood autonomy. Apart from questions of “economy of scale” — a water supply system cannot be planned and built on a neighbourhood basis — most decisions have “overspill effects” both in space and in time. They affect not only the people presently living in a given neighbourhood, but also those living in adjacent neighbourhoods as well as the future occupants who may belong to different classes with quite different needs and demands. Who can speak for these people who are not yet there? Probably only a larger unit in which they are already represented, if not in person, at least by members of a group with identical needs and demands.

Of course, including overspill effects cannot be the only consideration for defining an appropriate area of planning and government, because some interaction with others beyond the boundary will always occur. The decisive criterion is that interaction within an area is significantly more frequent and intense than interaction with outside areas. This is the case within the commuter watershed, which defines the Metropolitan Area. It is the predominant form of human settlement in contemporary Canada and, as such, the appropriate unit for government and planning below the provincial level; it should therefore be the government unit mainly responsible for the quality of the human settlement.

Actions of the higher levels of governments, of course, also influence that quality. What is most needed here, is co-ordination of the actions of the various departments of the Provincial and Federal Governments, not only at the centre, but in each region. Regional planning organizations, including regional administrators of these departments, together with representatives of the local municipalities, and possibly also of non-governmental organizations, are essential. However, they probably should not be governments; implementation of agreed on plans would remain a responsibility of the participating organizations.

Not only higher levels of governments, but all large organizations, including metropolitan governments, are faced with the problem that the “sectoral” organizations which they must set up to deal with specific aspects —

health, transportation, etc. — of the lives of their constituents, develop programmes which tend to become ends in themselves, without regard to their actual impact on the people affected by them. As one Swedish student put it: "we are always dealing with individuals when we should deal with individuals". Planning "from the top down" must therefore be supplemented by planning "from the grass- (or concrete-) roots up", by input from the individuals who are affected by it.

One step in this direction is the establishment (or preservation) of smaller elected municipal governments within the area under the jurisdiction of a metropolitan government. However, this is effective only if the metropolitan area is divided into a two-digit number of "boroughs" of much smaller and substantially equal size. Units of half-a-million population, such as the central cities and some boroughs of our largest metropolitan areas, cannot be significantly close to their constituents than can be metropolitan governments.

Even boroughs with populations of about 100,000 are too big as a basis for meaningful participation of a majority of their members. In Canada, only the "Uni-City" of Winnipeg has given official status to smaller units on the "neighbourhood" scale. In the main, "citizen participation" is practised through non-governmental groups. Many such groups have, of course, always and effectively participated in urban government; both area-wide groups representing material or ideological interests, and groups speaking for upper- and middle-class neighbourhoods. What is new is that in recent years also residents of low-income neighbourhoods have begun to speak up. This is a long overdue and most welcome development. It is certainly true that these — and all other — citizen groups tend to concentrate on protests against the immediately perceptible negative impact of public actions, with insufficient evaluation of the possibility much greater damage resulting from alternatives. However, this does not justify planners in rejecting participation, but obliges them to explain the alternatives immediately, fully, and in plain words. Participation needs time to mature; but, as Immanuel Kant noted 200 years ago, "freedom can be learned only through freedom".

### **Public and Private Interest in Land**

While contradictions between citizens' groups and their elected governments are inevitable, they are basic-

ally non-antagonistic and amenable to compromise. The contradiction between the interest of the community in land as a resource and the interest of the property owner in land as a commodity is of a different character.

Every planning measure, whether regulatory, such as zoning, or any creation of public works, such as roads or sewers, makes some pieces of land more desirable than others. It thereby shifts value from the land of some owners to that of others. Inevitably those who loose protest most strongly; and reasons of equity, frequently reinforced by political influence, make such protests effective. This greatly restricts the flexibility of planning. Once a public commitment, however tentative, has been made, it is hard to change, even if changed conditions or insights call for such a change. Where the shift of land values occurs within the property of one owner, this restriction does not exist. Experience confirms that urban development planned on the scale of a large estate, whether private or public, produces better results than piecemeal development under conditions of scattered ownership. As ownership of more than a small portion of a metropolitan area would create an unacceptable monopoly, such large-scale land ownership can only be public.

Advocates of public land ownership generally put more emphasis on two other points: the right of the community to claim the "unearned increment" of land value, and a lowering of the cost of new housing by a reduction of land cost. The latter implies that the community would pass on all or part of the increment to the owners or renters of new housing; as most of these have an above average ability to pay, this would mean a regressive redistribution of income. Lowering of land cost should occur only under conditions of oligopolistic pricing, resulting from artificial restriction of the supply of developable land. Such restriction may be brought about by a conspiracy of landowners or, more likely, by a withholding by provinces and their municipalities of permits and/or public works indispensable for development.

The claim to the "unearned income" or rent derived from land is based on the fact that it is created entirely by the community; the landowners can do nothing to raise it. If the land were still owned by the original settler, who generally did not pay for it, there could be no objection to the community claiming this value. However, as land has for centuries been exchanged against commodities, it is,

under our institutions, entitled to the same degree of protection against expropriation as other forms of investment.

The value of investment in industrial and commercial properties is, of course, often substantially decreased by government action in fields such as taxation, tariffs, or regulation of freight rates. Investment in land has no claim to immunity from this type of losses. There can therefore be no valid objection to an increase of the tax on land which is now levied by municipalities. Assuming that this tax now amounts to 20% of the rent, then the 80% remaining for the property owner is capitalized as the value of his land. If the tax is doubled, only 60% is capitalized; the land value is reduced by a quarter. This does not automatically benefit the home buyer, who will pay in taxes what he saves in mortgage payments. But it will make speculative land holding very costly and thereby bring more land onto the market. Both this easing of the market and the reduction of land prices will greatly facilitate extension of public land ownership.

Increases in the land tax will have to proceed together with decreases with the tax on buildings, with which it is coupled under the name of "real property tax". More than half of the tax on buildings falls on residential buildings and is paid by their occupants, tenants or owners. As the percentage of income paid for housing rises steeply as income falls, this is a highly regressive tax. The part of the tax which falls on industrial-commercial buildings constitutes part of their cost production and is passed on to the consumers of the goods or services which they sell. It acts as a general sales tax. While this is not as regressive as the housing tax, it is certainly not progressive.

In fact, it is not possible for municipalities to raise substantial amounts by any form of progressive taxation, because it is too easy for wealthy taxpayers to evade them by moving across the municipal boundary. Such taxes should be levied on a national basis and allocated to municipalities proportional to their population. This would also be a much simpler, more equitable and more effective method of regional income equalization than those presently in use.

The proposed tax reform would do more for the improvement of the quality of life in human settlements and for regional equalization than all the busy housing and regional development programmes now being operated by huge and proliferating Federal and Provincial bureaucracies.

## Management of Urban Life



## Two Kinds of Planning

The discussion so far has dealt with the task which has traditionally been the responsibility of professionals in the fields of urban and regional planning (*urbanisme et aménagement du territoire*). This task is the adaptation of the physical environment to human needs. It deals primarily with the where and how of capital investments, both public and private.

However, capital investments in public works and control over private investments in "real estate" are only a part, albeit an important one, of the responsibilities of governments; they engage in many continuous activities, carried out day-by-day through the work of their employees. All these activities, as well as those of private corporations and of individuals, have to be planned, before they can be carried out. Such "activity planning", or "management planning" deals primarily with the question *what* to do, how much, and in what sequence; its time horizon tends to be shorter than that of physical planning.

Such planning is carried out primarily by the professionals who manage a department responsible for a specified sector, such as education, national defence, agriculture, health, etc. But who plans the planners? As noted earlier, co-ordination at the top tends to be weak. One attempt to strengthen it at the urban level has been the creation of professional city managers. On all levels there has been a rapid growth of a planning staff advisory to the executive. In Canada, it is being recruited largely, though by no means exclusively, from the established planning profession which attempts to extend its competence beyond the planning of the physical environment into that of planning the management of a wide range of activities.

It may be questioned whether a single profession can cover so broad a field. In the Soviet Union, where social-economic planning developed ahead of physical planning, two distinct planning professions have been established. Certainly, planners of the physical environment have to understand the activities which they have to house; and activity planners must understand the physical framework of the activities with which they are

concerned. Evidently, there is overlap and a need for co-operation.

But is the answer complete integration? The question is particularly important for planning schools. Should they attempt to form a “universal” planner, or a “basic” planner who has to add a special field, or two (or more) different types of planners? An international exchange of experiences and views concerning this problem might well be one of the most fruitful exercises of the “Habitat” conferences.

### **Citizens’ Participation in Management**

“Citizens participation”, in the sense this term is being presently used, refers generally to organized opposition of the residents of a neighbourhood to actions and policies which threaten to disrupt their way of life. First and foremost among these is the policy of slum clearance, variously christened “sanitation”, “redevelopment”, or “renewal”. Despite the warnings of Patrick Geddes, the policy of slum clearance claims to improve the quality of life of the affected residents. Certainly they are more than justified in claiming that they know best and should decide what kind of improvements they need.

The situation is quite different when disruption is the result of changes required by structural changes of the urban area. Such changes are intended to benefit other groups, future occupants and/or residents of other parts of the area. Their interests may legitimately outweigh the interest of the present residents in undistributed occupancy. In such cases, citizen’s participation, while it may sometimes modify the extent and timing of the changes, must be concerned primarily with planning for the re-establishment — not merely the “relocation” — of the present occupants.

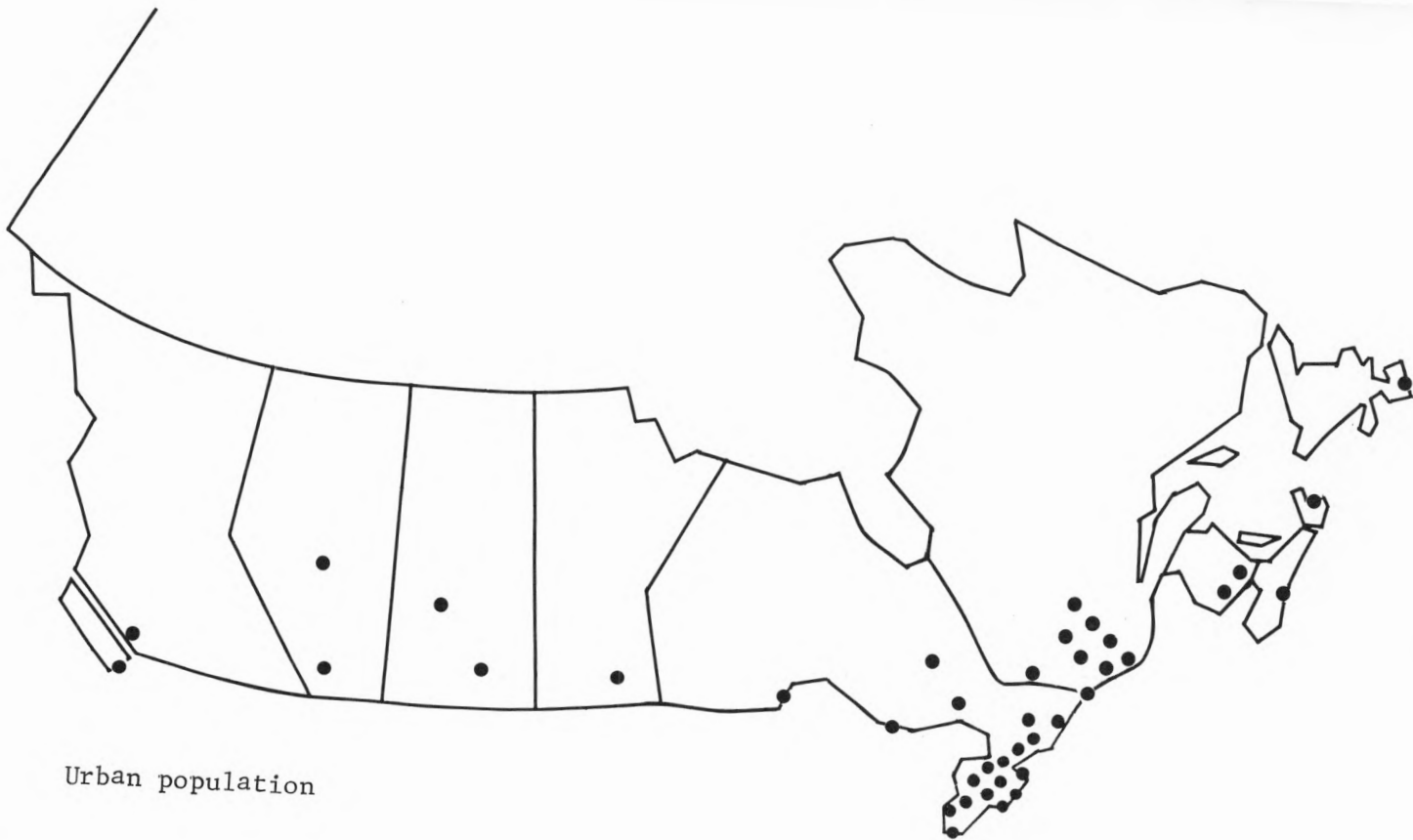
Whatever the reasons for disruption, citizens’ participation has forcefully brought home the fact that people’s main problems are not physical, but social, and call for “social planning”. It is here, in the field of “software” rather than of the “hardware” of physical planning, that there is the greatest scope for neighbourhood participation and self-determination. The planning and management of current activities in recreation, social welfare,



street maintenance and many other fields has hardly any effect on future residents and little on those outside the neighbourhoods. Its results are visible in short order and can easily be evaluated by the residents. Such civic activities are both in themselves an enrichment of the "quality of life" of those engaged in them, and a means of their development into citizens able and willing to exercise their rights and duties. But they can bring about the required social change only if they extend well beyond the neighbourhood. Indeed, our "urban problems", while *in* the city, are not problems *of* the city. They are problems of society; they can be defined as the trinity of unemployment, maldistribution of income, and alienation from their labour and its products of practically the entire working population.

These problems lie outside the responsibility of the planner as a professional. But they are not outside his responsibility as a citizen and as a human being.

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Urban population